

# Autobiography of Richard Thomas Martin

A Pictorial Abridgment

*Some events in my life, which have been recorded periodically from 1998 until 2023, including my early challenges, first jobs, conversion, mission, marriage, graduation from the University of Houston, teaching, financial career, births of four children, teaching seminary for five years, tennis, coaching, travel to fifty states and more than sixty countries, campaign for Utah Governor, promotion of a new Utah flag, Magellan trip around the world, interest in history, astronomy, and physics; my thoughts about life, love for genealogy, and compilation of over thirty books.*



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## Introduction

**T**his business of living is an amazing thing, and sometimes it's incomprehensible. Even without consulting the sacred texts, it's obvious to me that there must be a profound purpose for our existence. Evidence of this can be seen in the world around us. There are so many factors that have to be perfect for life to take place. In fact the odds of our being here (because of entropy and other physical laws) are something like a trillion to nothing. As Sir Fred Hoyle said, "Random and impersonal chance does not create complexity and design." So I concluded a long time ago that a supreme creator placed me on earth for a magnificent purpose. I thank him each day for another day to live, and I want to use my time well while I have it.

Today I feel we are drowning in trivia. Much of what we concentrate on and give our attention to is not beneficial or important. Thus being distracted, we waste our time and energy and don't accomplish what we could. People have so much potential, but this is one of the great challenges of life, to decide what existence means, and to do something about it.

My role in this remarkable, human drama has been small. At this time I'm just one of eight billion people on earth. Interestingly, worldwide, 140 million people are born each year and about 60 million die during the same period. Is it any wonder then that even the most powerful and famous are soon forgotten? Far less than one percent of the population leave any kind of personal history or autobiography behind when they die. After a few years it becomes as if they never existed.

We live in a beautiful world and we are meant to enjoy and appreciate our lives. What I have found is that I appreciate life more by recording it. More than 20 years ago I began my autobiography. First I wrote about my childhood years, then college, marriage, children, career, and so forth to the present time. Later, I got into the habit of adding regularly to this account until it is now over 1,200 pages long. From the beginning, I thought it was important to accompany the written word with photographs. In fact the pictures are my favorite part.

Now I realize that few people will ever read this account of my life, but I wrote it for myself as much as I did for others. When I look through these pages and see when I was a boy, my happy high school days, and so forth, it makes me appreciative because I've been blessed. I see God's hand in bringing me the gospel when I was a teenager, which gave me hope and a wonderful new outlook on life. This led to my service as a missionary, which were the two most meaningful years of my early life. On my return home, I soon met my wife, who was impressed to move to Houston, where we met. After earning my degree, I had a good experience teaching business for two years before being led into a financial career, which was a perfect fit for my interest and personality. We prospered and I enjoyed my independence and what I was doing. Karen and I had four children. I coached for a few years and at times played a lot of tennis. I wrote a book that was published and sold in book stores nationwide, and soon thereafter, wrote two major genealogical books for my extended family. I continued my genealogical pursuits with purpose and enthusiasm until I had compiled more than 30 books. I ran a serious campaign for governor of Utah, and later, lobbied to get a new state flag. This flag, which was designed by my oldest son, was approved as the official commemorative flag for the state of Utah in 2021; the first such flag created in over a hundred years. (In 2023, the state adopted a new, official state flag, which was also designed by Jonathan Martin.) Three years ago I completed a trip around the world with my youngest daughter, where we stopped in 12 counties from New Zealand to Iceland, and flew for a total

of 29,130 miles. (The circumference of the earth at the Equator is 24,901 miles.) I've traveled to all 50 states and more than 60 countries.

Of course there is more to life than what we've done and where we've been. The inner person is rarely revealed in histories of any kind, and that may be the most difficult part to know about an individual. As Einstein once said of himself, "The essential in the being of a man of my type lies precisely in what he thinks and how he thinks, not in what he does or suffers." I've believed for a long time that on the Day of Judgement everyone will be weighed by the intents of their heart. We may have meant well and been misunderstood, but everything will be made right in the end, and that is reassuring. An interesting corollary to this is that often when a person does wrong they appear to get away with it, but actually God is just giving them enough rope to hang themselves, if that is what they want. That's why there is so much unnecessary suffering in the world. We ignore our conscience and go down an easy or forbidden path, and miss our higher destiny. In the end no one gets away with anything that is wrong.

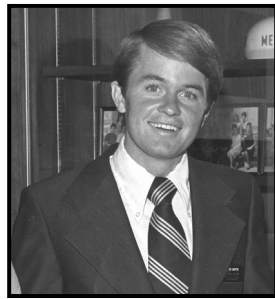
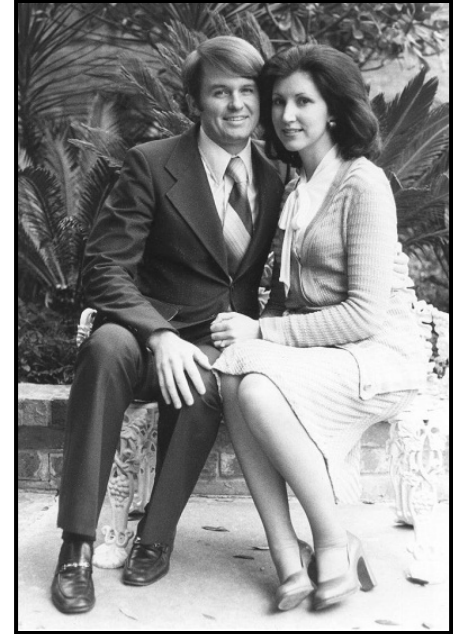
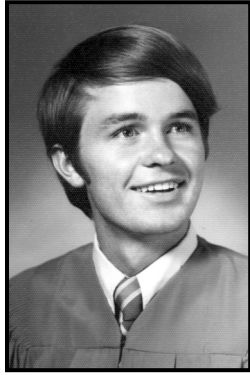
Within this history there are a number of places where I have written my thoughts about life. I have found it beneficial to reflect on the deeper meaning of existence because this is who I really am. In fact, it's rare for me not to think about the purpose of life. By doing this I believe I'm better able to appreciate the privilege of living, and the magnificent creation that I'm a part of. An ancient document says that if you knew what you were before, or could see what you are to be hereafter, then you wouldn't worry about anything. Nothing could discourage you at all. (*Thanksgiving Hymn* in the Dead Sea Scrolls)

Therefore, I thank God for my life. As a scripture says, "All things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things." He preserves us and is merciful and kind. Our destiny is magnificent. I cannot say enough about the greatness of God, and I will give thanks to him forever.

(This is the introduction I wrote for my unabridged history. The text of this abridged history is very short, but there are over 490 photographs contained within it. In our busy world, I assume that most people will prefer this account.)

# Autobiography of Richard T. Martin

I was born on the twelfth day of October 1953, in Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas, the youngest child of Marion “Junior” Carlos Sharp, Jr. and Patricia “Pat” Anna Elizabeth Bowles and named Richard Thomas



Top from left: My high school graduation picture taken in 1972; at Disneyland in 1961; with my grandmother, Frances Massey Bowles, in 1957; my engagement photograph with Karen Piquet in 1976; performing on stage—I had a lead role in a major school play; missionary in 1974; tournament player on high school tennis team; I’m on the front row, right, with siblings, cousins, and grandparents, in December 1962; high school photograph taken in 1973; with my grandfather, Marion Sharp, Sr. in 1973; with my grandfather, Marion Sharp, Sr. in 1986, and Karen with Jonathan and Sarah in 1986.

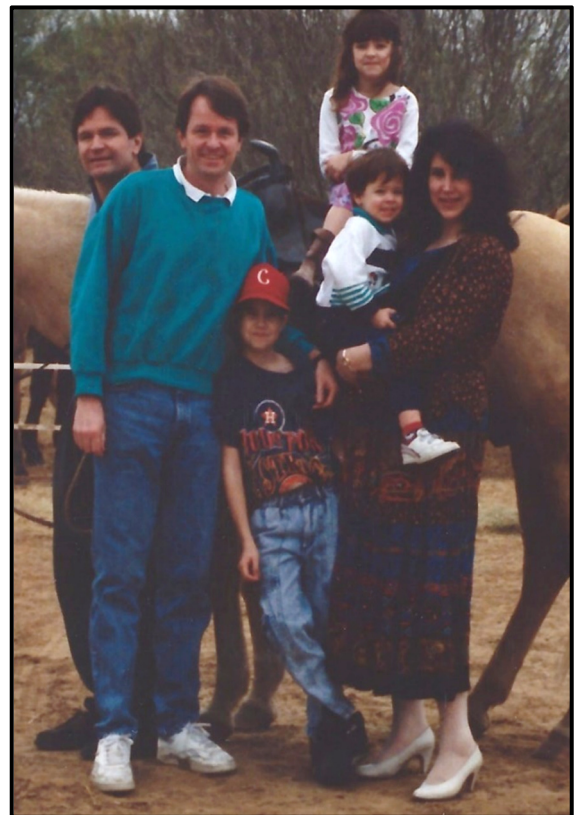
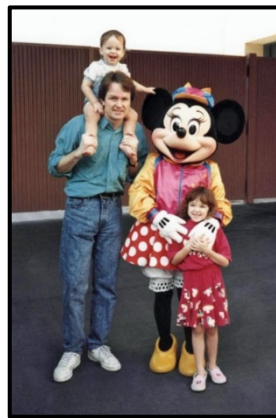
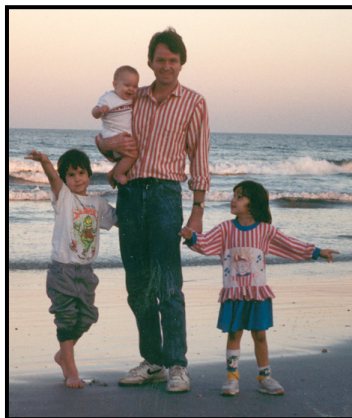
Sharp. When I was young my parents moved to Houston, Texas, where I grew up and resided until 1998, when I moved with my wife and four children to Provo, Utah. (My mother married Glen Nelson Martin in 1959 who adopted me and my three siblings, changing our surname to Martin.)



In 1968 I met two missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They were in my parent’s home to teach my older sister at her



invitation. Immediately the thought came to me that said, “They are holy men,” and then a second



Top from left: I'm with my children, Christmas 1992; with Pres. Spencer W. Kimball; George Pekar, 1987; Sarah took this photo of me in 1989, and Disneyland in 1993. Middle: I'm with my kids on Atlantic shore, Nov. 1989, and Disneyworld, 1991. Above: In Laredo, Texas, with my family and brother, Ron, in 1992. Left: Holding newborn Rebecca Martin in 1995; champion team that I coached—my son, Jonathan, second from left on front row, and at the Texas Renaissance Festival with my youngest son, Michael, by my side in 1998.

thought, “And they are much better than you.” Such thoughts were remarkable to me because that was not my normal way of thinking. Later my sister joined the church, which caused me to read and study the literature she left around the house. I soon studied



with the missionaries and believed what they taught was true. I was most impressed by the Plan of



Top from left: I'm holding Rebecca beside the grave of my 8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother in Massachusetts in 1998; with my children in 1993, and my favorite childhood home 1960-1963. Middle from left: I'm standing next to my sisters Cathy and Nancy and brother, Ron, in 1992; Karen and me in 1976; Karen at BYU in 1973; giving a speech during my campaign for governor, 2010; Festival of Colors in 2011, and a sunflower field in New Zealand, 2010. Above: On top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa in 2009. Right, my children: Sarah (born 1985), Michael (born 1989), Jonathan (born 1982), and Rebecca (born 1995) in 2013.

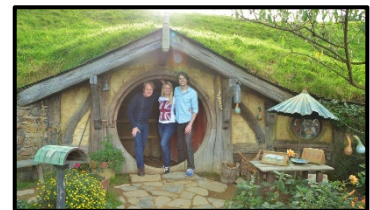
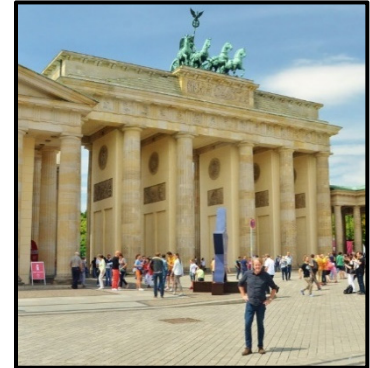


Salvation. I had been taught that there was a Heaven and a Hell and that I would be going to one or the other when I died, but I knew I wasn't living right so I thought I was going to go to

Hell. The missionaries explained that there were different degrees of Heaven. This gave me hope and



I thought, “I can make it to at least the lowest Heaven.” Not only did I believe what they taught me—



This page from top left: Hartford Cemetery, 1994; Festival of Colors, 2013; London, 2014; Delicate Arch in Moab, Utah; Great Gallery in Southern Utah; farthest point east in Australia, 2015; Belin, Germany, 2015; on movie set with Jonathan and Becca, 2015; Copenhagen, 2015; Viking Museum in Oslo; Neolithic site in England, 2017, and Hobbiton, N.Z, 2015.

I loved it! It filled my soul with light and I began to study earnestly all the scriptures and church writings.

When I was sixteen years old I took to heart the church teaching of salvation for the dead. I enrolled in a class on how to do research, keep records, and sub-



mit work to the church for temple ordinances. At first I did it because it seemed the right thing to do,



Top, left to right: Great Buddha of Kamakura, Japan, 2013; oldest rock sculpture in Germany, 2015; with the Duke in Monument Valley, 2014, and in Telluride, Colorado, 2015. Middle, left to right: My home in Utah; tennis has been a part of my life since high school, and wearing my famous screw for Halloween, 2012. Above, left to right: Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland, 2017, and Festival of Colors, 2019. Right: Southwest Ireland, 2017. Travel is a big deal to me and I've gone repeatedly to Europe.

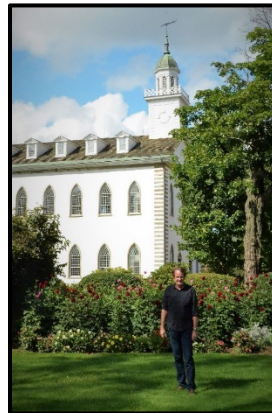
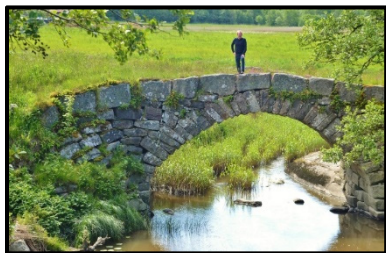
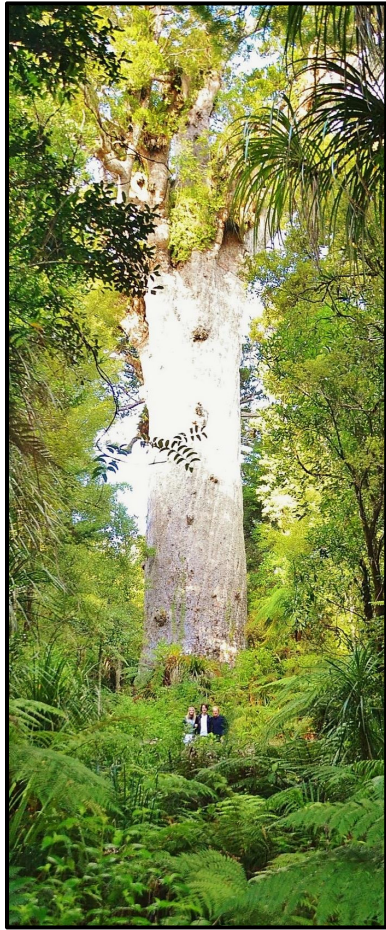


but later it took on a deeper meaning and I began to love to do genealogical work for its own sake. My grandmother, Frances Massey Bowles, also had a passion for genealogy and her research helped me get a good start.

During this time I was very involved in my large high school, had a lead in a major school play, was pres-



ident of the art club, and was a tournament player on the school tennis team. I didn't realize it at the



time, but I was popular. I talked with my friends openly about the church and they all knew me as a “Mormon.” (In fact when I went to my high school reunion the main question that they asked me was, “Are you still a Mormon?”) There were only ten members of the church in my entire high school.

In 1973 I left my girlfriend behind and served for two years as a missionary in the California Los Angeles Mission. I taught hundreds of people and many of them joined the church. It was the happiest two years of my life. The brotherhood among the missionaries was wonderful and many of us became good friends. It is sometimes a wonder to me

Top left: Tane Mahuta, the largest kauri tree in the world, New Zealand; 2015. Top middle: Rebecca's 1<sup>st</sup> graduation in 2016. Top right: Sarah holding baby Houston (my first grandson), with Jonathan, on January 6, 2016. Middle: Largest rock art figure in Scandinavia; 2015. Bottom left to right: Medieval bridge in Sweden, 2015; I'm with aliens in Roswell, New Mexico, in 2017; Kirtland, Ohio, 2016, and Rebecca at Disneyland in 2015. (I've gone to Disneyland/world with my family more than 25 times since my first visit in 1959.)



that I actually contacted new people every day and worked in some very dangerous areas, such



Top left: Jonathan and Rebecca at FilmQuest; 2017. Top middle: Rebecca's 2<sup>nd</sup> graduation in London (MBA); 2017. Top right: At door of collapsing house; 2014. Above: Karen and me in Goblin Valley, 2019, and (far left) in Northern Italy, 2017. Middle: Rebecca and boy Houston; 2018. Left: USA Today article and photograph of our proposed new Utah flag; February 2019. Bottom: Rebecca riding a moose near Yellowstone in summer 2018.

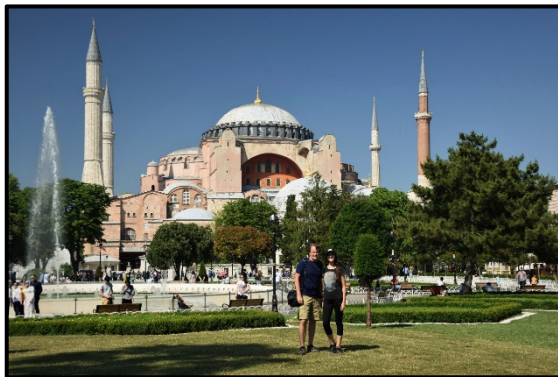


as Watts, which before my time there and after, had some serious riots. In fact at the time I worked there it was considered the most dangerous neighborhood in America, but the truth is, we were willing to give our lives for the gospel. (I was robbed at gunpoint there.)

I returned home in 1975 and soon met this amazing, beautiful girl who had just moved to Houston. She had already graduated from BYU and had come to Houston to get a better paying job. I dated her for five days and knew I was going to marry her. Two weeks later she was in love with me and this was the beginning of our happy life together. I married Karen Piquet on January



5, 1977, in her hometown of Idaho Falls, Idaho, and then we returned to southwest Houston, where



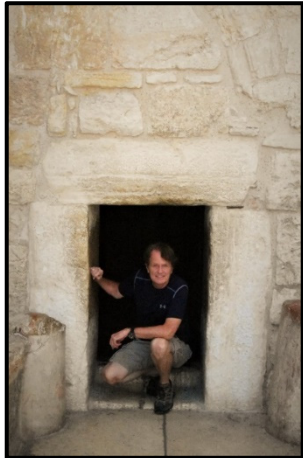
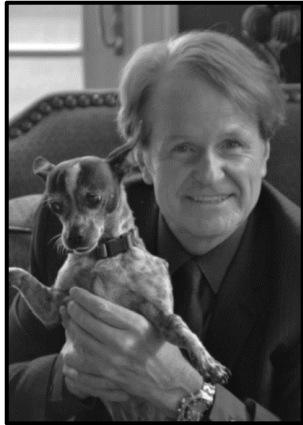
we lived in a small apartment. She worked and I went to school at the University of Houston, while also working part time for McGraw Hill, where I assisted in the production of a daily oil publication. I graduated with a degree in business in May 1979, and immediately got an excellent job at one of the best public schools in the Houston area, teaching business. I did that for two years and then began my career as an independent annuity broker. The way I found this profession is special. One Saturday afternoon I was sitting in the living room of my small home and pondering on what I should do for work. Although I enjoyed teaching, the pay wasn't very good and I knew I wanted to do more with my life. Six months earlier an acquaintance had proposed

**Top left: My family on October 12, 2017. Top right: Rebecca at Halloween in 2011. Middle left: Angkor Wat, Cambodia; 2019. Middle: Medieval bridge in Ireland; 2017. Left: Istanbul, Turkey, in 2019. Above: The Great Pyramid in Giza, Egypt, in 2019. Cambodia, Egypt, and Turkey were three of the 13 countries that we visited during our trip around the world in May and June 2019. It was the greatest trip of our lives.**

and I went to school at the University of Houston, while also working part time for McGraw Hill, where I assisted in the production of a daily oil publication. I graduated with a degree in business in May 1979, and immediately got an excellent job at one of the best public schools in the Houston area, teaching business. I did that for two years and then began my career as an independent annuity broker. The way I found this profession is special. One Saturday afternoon I was sitting in the living room of my small home and pondering on what I should do for work. Although I enjoyed teaching, the pay wasn't very good and I knew I wanted to do more with my life. Six months earlier an acquaintance had proposed



that I become an annuity broker, like himself, but that sounded awful to me. Then as I thought about



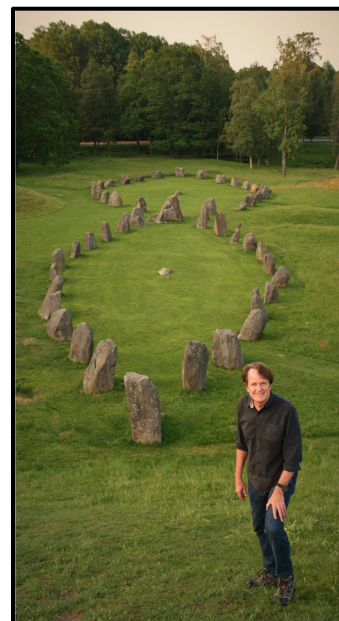
**Top right: I'm in Sequoia National Park on October 12, 2018, my 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. Top left: I'm holding Willow our pet for 12 years in 2014. Top middle: Oldest petroglyphs in North America in Nevada; 2019. Middle, left to right: Egyptian Museum in Cairo; ossuary of Caiaphas, who condemned Jesus, and Tomb in Giza; 2019. Above, left to right: Door of Humility in Bethlehem; Jewish Holy of Holies from Tell Arad; lowest place on earth in Israel, and northwestern wall of Jerusalem; 2019.**

of my life and because of it, I knew what I should do. I completed my contract with the school district

what he had said, I began to have this wonderful feeling that that was exactly what I should do. It was one of the most spiritual experiences



and then began my new career. The first month I made more money than I had ever made before,



**Top left:** I took this photograph of a total eclipse of the sun on August 21, 2017. Totality lasted 2 minutes and 21 seconds at our location near Driggs, Idaho. **Top middle:** Garden Tomb in Jerusalem; 2019. **Above right:** Viking burial site in Sweden from 600 B.C. **Left:** Special elephant in Thailand, holding me with his trunk. **Interesting place in Iceland** where the North American Plate and Eurasian Plate come together; 2019.

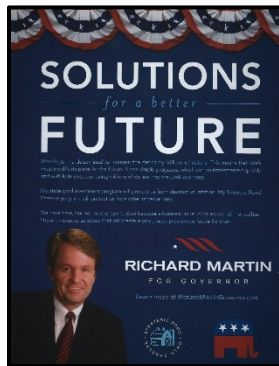
and the second month I almost doubled that. Soon I became one of the top brokers in the country and a few years later I was the number one broker in the nation for

a few different companies. I've always felt grateful to Heavenly Father that he gave me this great career, which allowed me to later invest my time in many other meaningful things in life, such as my family history. It also let me be independent and not under the authority of other people.

Karen and I moved to north Houston in 1982 where we bought a beautiful custom home and had our first child, Jonathan Thomas Martin. Two and a half years later, we had Sarah Ellen Martin, and in 1989, Michael Richard Martin was born. These were happy, productive years. My career continued to grow and in the meantime I taught early morning seminary at 6 a.m., 162 days each year, for four years. I also taught some classes at church and worked each week with the full-time missionaries.



My best friend was George Pekar and we played tennis together three times each week. In some ways this was a



Top right: Borgund Stave Church in Norway; 2019. Right: Vasa, a resurrected 1628 ship, in Stockholm, Sweden; 2019. Top left: Karen and me next to a 1938 truck in Colorado; 2019. Middle: Anglo-Saxon Church in Bradford-on-Avon, England, and Rebecca and me in London; 2017. Above left: Goblin Valley; 2017. Above right: My ad for governor that went to 1 million people in 2010.

golden time of my life, perhaps because I experienced so many new things that were good.

In 1989 we moved to a new home in another part of north Houston. My friend, George Pekar, died



with his wife in a car accident that same year and some of the dynamics of my life changed, but



**Top, left to right: Ghostbuster Fire Station in New York City, 2013; I'm standing next to one of the oldest trees on Earth that is nearly 5,000 years old in Nevada, 2011; Kamakura, Japan, 2013, and Lincoln, England, in 2017. Above: Rebecca and me near Tower Bridge in London; 2017. Right: I'm next to one of the 14 monuments that my brother and I placed over the graves of our relatives between 2007 and 2009.**

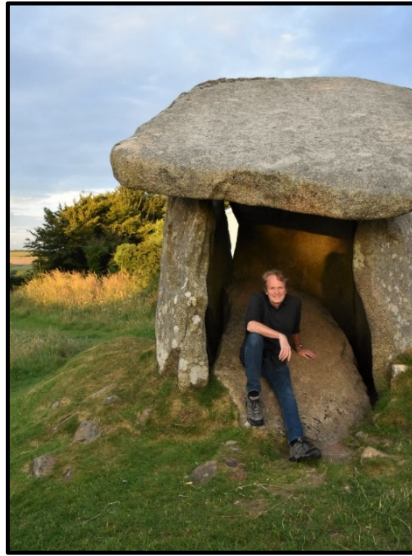
things were still very good. In the 1990s I coached one season of baseball and five seasons of basketball. Two of my basketball teams were champions and my son Jonathan was a leading scorer and an all-star. I was even chosen to be an all-star coach, which was a top honor.

On August 30, 1995, our last child, Rebecca Elise Martin, was born. The next year I wrote a manuscript for a missionary book and in early 1998 it was published by Horizon Publishers, at that time the third largest publisher of its kind in the country. It was distributed nationwide and was on book shelves for eight years, an unusually long time for any book.

In 1998 I began to ponder on what changes that I should make in my life. I thought about my genealogical work and the idea came to me that I should put all of my family history research into book form. I said to myself, "I'm an okay writer, but not a great one." A voice said to me (not a real one),



“You will get better.” So I began to compile all of my records into books and wrote 29 different,



**Top left:** Dinosaur tracks in Arizona; 2017. **Top middle:** Neolithic site in Cornwall, England; 2016. **Top right:** In Istanbul, Turkey; 2019. **Above left:** Photograph on season pass to AstroWorld in 1992. For three years I took my kids to AstroWorld almost every week. **Above middle:** Houston and I played in these leaves on a Saturday afternoon in October 2019. **Middle right:** Main entrance to Auschwitz in southern Poland; 2019. **Right:** I'm feeding elephants in Thailand in May 2019. In my travels, I like to visit genealogical, historical, and ancient sites more than anything else.

individual family histories. Two years later I compiled all of these histories into two books entitled, *The Sharp Family in America* and *The Bowles-*

*Massey Families in America*. I also interviewed 15 of my cousins and wrote their biographies, which I placed in these books. In the early 2000s I did research and wrote another book entitled *Seasons to Remember*, which is the family history of my stepfather, Vester Crocker. To complete these books I traveled (often with my older brother) to most of the important towns associated with my genealogy and did research in the local county libraries and courthouses in the eastern United States.

Although many people expressed admiration for my work, I was not totally satisfied, and after a couple of years began work on new editions. I didn't realize at the time that I would be working on these new publications for many years. At first I continued to do research the old fashion way, but



soon began to appreciate the immense amount of new information on the Internet—my two favorite



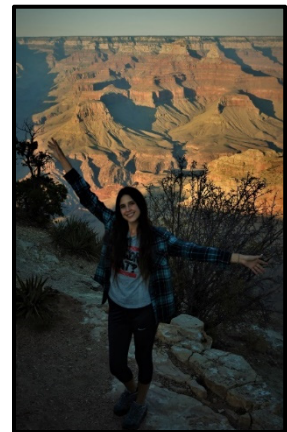
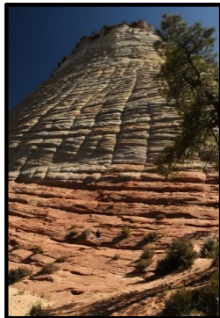
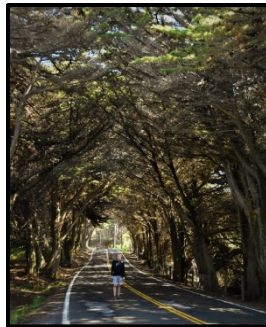
**Above: My last day on Earth in Moab, Utah, on October 13, 2019. Top middle: Hearst Castle in California; 2015. Top right: Colorful building in Galveston, Texas; 2015. I usually visit Galveston when I make a business trip to Houston. Right: Houston is standing next to me while I hold Allister, Sarah's amazing dog, on October 25, 2019.**

sites being Ancestry.com and Find a Grave. One of the great things my brother and I did during this time was to place 14 granite monuments over the graves of 18 great-grandparent, one great-aunt and one great-uncle, who did not previously have any markers.

Finally in 2019 I came to a completion point and placed my research on this Internet site. The new work is much larger than the previous books that I published. The previous publications were 2,278



pages long, but the new ones are 6,758 pages long, not counting the biographies. Including the



Top right: I'm with my son, Jonathan (*The Invisible Man*), and grandson, Houston (*Dracula*), on Halloween night, 2019. (I'm six feet tall, but my son is taller.) Once again, I have a screw in my head, which looks so real that I get a lot of questions about it. It was another successful Halloween with over 300 visitors, the most ever. Top left: I'm standing at a colorful rock art site in the desert near Las Vegas in 2020. Middle: Nowhere, Nevada, May 4, 2020; tunnel of trees on main highway near Fort Bragg, California, May 5, 2020; Grand Teton Mountains, May 28, 2020. Above left: Zions National Park— Checkerboard Mesa, Angel Landing Trail and me walking from Checkerboard Mesa, June 17, 2020. Above right: Rebecca at the Grand Canyon, October 11, 2020.

biographies they are over 9,400 pages long. This total does not include the new edition of *Seasons to Remember*. If counted another way, there are over 16,000 pages of my history on this website.

There is much more that I could include in this autobiography, but I have intentionally keep it short to



avoid being tedious. I have said very little about my family and, of course, they are the center of my life.

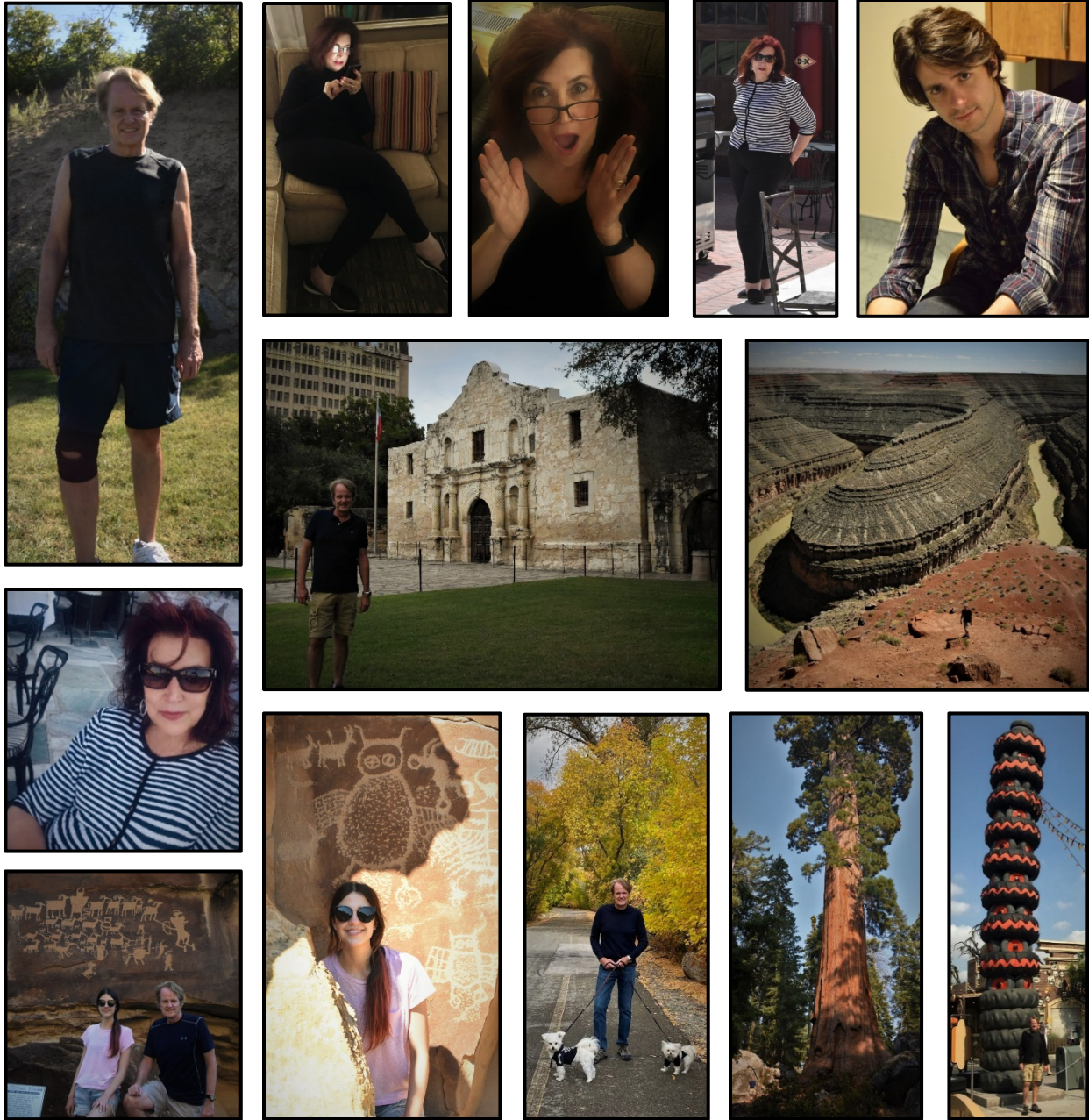


Top right: Lewis Falls in Yellowstone, May 28, 2020. Top left and middle: Meteor Crater in Arizona; sitting in an old barber shop in Seligman, Arizona; Grand Canyon, "Standing on the Corner" in Winslow, Arizona, October 12, 2020. I'm with my stepsister, Vickie Crocker in Rockdale, Texas, November 2020. Left: Rebecca at Grand Prismatic Spring and me at Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone in 2020. Above: I'm with my grandson Houston in 2021; Rebecca getting kissed by a dinosaur, 2021; with Houston and Maddie, Christmas 2021; Becca with her dogs, Captain and Littles, Halloween 2021, and me with Bobbie Pekar near Bryce Canyon in 2021.

Other events in my life include running for governor of Utah in 2010. It was a complete, professional campaign. I had a manager, spoke on eight radio talk shows, had hundreds of radio commercials, and hundreds of prime time television ads. My magazine ads went out to over a million people. I spoke in 25 counties, was on television a number of times, and had the endorsement of a former congressman. In America, eighty-five percent of incumbents win and this time it was no different, but what an experience! Later I was asked to run again, but turned down the offer.



Earlier this year I created Organization for a New State Flag and we promoted a wonderful, handsome new



**Top left: Photograph of me taken by Houston, age five, in 2021. Top middle and left: Karen in 2021. Top right: My youngest son, Michael, in 2016. Middle: I'm at the Alamo and at Goosenecks State Park, Utah, in 2017. Above, left to right: Rebecca and me at the Great Hunt and Owl Petroglyphs in Nine Mile Canyon, Utah, 2021. I'm walking the dogs on the Provo Canyon Trail in October 2022; you can barely see me (lower left) next to a giant, ancient sequoia tree in Sequoia National Park, August 21, 2021, and I'm at California Adventure in September 2021.**

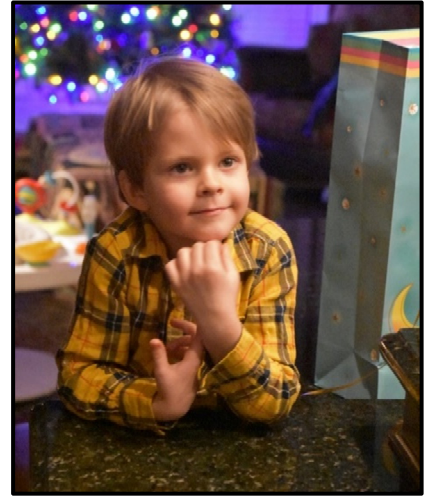
flag that was designed by my son Jonathan. This campaign for a new flag caught the attention of the entire state and we were front page news on every major newspaper in Utah, and many times were a major story on the evening news. A picture of the flag and a complementary news story (that went nationwide) was even in USA Today. I was told that of the 1,600 bills before the legislature in 2019, we became the number one bill. My son and I lobbied for the bill and we spoke before a House







City, Utah, on May 7, 2019, and completed our journey on June 17, 2019. We visited New Zealand,



Top left: New flag that my son and I proposed for Utah, which was accepted as the official commemorative flag for the state in March 2021. (It is the first, completely new state flag to be adopted in over 100 years, and my son designed it. See [newutahflag.org](http://newutahflag.org)) Our flag flying over the capitol building in June 2021. Top right: Jonathan and Emily at Disneyland in June 2021. They will probably marry in 2023; Houston Martin on his fifth birthday, 2021. Middle: I'm next to a 1,000 year old cross, and at a Norman entrance from the 1100s at St. Bees Priory, England, that my 27<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather built. Left: Karen at Monte Alban, Mexico, in 1985. Above: Whitby, England, in 2022.

Australia, Cambodia, Thailand, Dubai, Egypt, Israel, Istanbul, Poland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Chicago before arriving back in Salt Lake City. In all we took



18 flights and I drove thousands of miles in eight of the countries we visited. It was a magnificent



Top, from left: Effigies of Robert de Ferrers (1100-1162) and Margaret Peveral (1114-1154), my 23<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandparents, in Merevale Abbey, which they built; effigy of King John (1166-1216), my 26<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, in Worcester Cathedral, England, and Peveril Castle, built by my 25<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, William Peverel (1040-1115). Middle, from left: Place where Mayflower left Plymouth, England, in 1620 for America; lighthouse from 1757 in Plymouth; Great Hall of Oakham Castle built by Walkelin de Ferrers, my 26<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, in 1185 A.D., and Becca next to the effigy of Robert de Vere, her 26<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, in Hatfield Broad Oak, England. Above: I'm at Arthur's Stone near the border of Wales in May 2022, and reconstruction of home of Eric the Red (950-1003) and Leif Erikson (970-1020) in Iceland. Right: Jonathan and I with Senators McKay and Bramble after the senate passed our flag bill in 2021. It took three years, but the state legislature finally agreed to adopt our image as a state flag.

adventure and we learned much. (For example we learned that people in Cambodia live on \$127 a month. We made many purchases there and even bought an edible scorpion.)

There is so much more that I would like to write, but I will let this suffice. Every day I want to

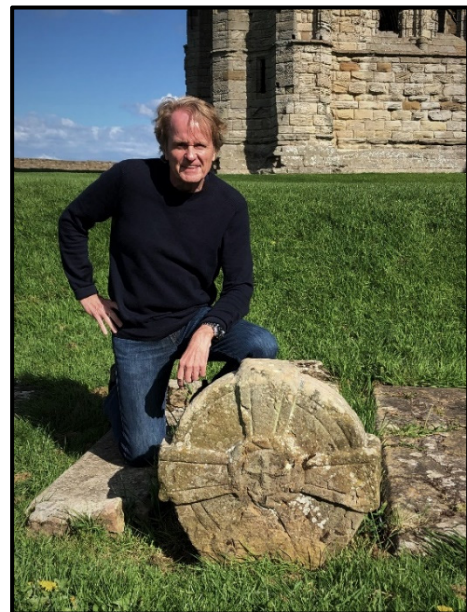


accomplish something that is worthwhile. The histories I have compiled on this website are important



**Top right:** Bewcastle Anglo-Saxon Cross, which is 14.5 feet tall. It has been standing in the churchyard of St. Cuthbert's church at Bewcastle, England, for at least 1,300 years; May 8, 2022. **Top middle:** Arthur's Stone, a five thousand year old site near the border of Wales. It was a magical moment when the sun came out and a rainbow formed behind us; May 2022. **Top left and below:** Irton Anglo-Saxon Cross, which dates from the early 9<sup>th</sup> century; largest stone at Long Meg and Her Daughters Stone Circle in northern England; Viking site in Iceland; statue of William Marshal, my 25<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, next to his castle in Pembroke, Wales. The plaque reads: "WILLIAM MARSHAL / 1147-1219 / THE GREATEST KNIGHT." **Above:** Jefferson Memorial in Washington D.C. We are direct descendants of the family of Thomas Jefferson. **Cast of a Megalodon's jaw in Salt Lake Aquarium.** **Right:** I'm kneeling next to what may be one of my ancestor's graves at the Abbey in Whitby, England, in May 2022.

to me. I care about many of the people that I have written about and feel close to them. I believe that I have been guided in my family history research, sometimes in almost miraculous ways, and feel grateful to God that he has given me the opportunity to do this work. RICHARD T. MARTIN (2019)





## Addendum

Today is November 7, 2022, and I thought I would like to update this summary of my life. Since my



**Top left: Eleanor of Castile (1241-1290) Cross in Geddington, England, which is the finest of the three remaining crosses (out of 12) erected by Edward I in memory of his beloved wife. Edward I and Elinor are my 23<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandparents. Top right from left: Unconditional Surrender statue in San Diego; Salt Flats, and an old town in California; 2021. Middle: I'm with Big Foot in South Dakota, and at Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone; both September 2022. Above, left to right: Michael with Ernie Hudson of Ghostbusters fame in 2014; we are all with Michael's family at the Hogle Zoo in September 2022, and I'm in a log with Maddie and Houston on the same day. Right: I'm with a nighcrawler on Halloween 2022.**

last entry I've gone on a number of trips: Four to San Diego and southern California, two trips to the redwoods of northern California, another excursion to Death Valley, two more trips to Yellowstone,



and a major trip with Rebecca to Iceland, England, and northeast United States. I also went on two



genealogical trips with my nephew, David Moran, to Arkansas and Tennessee. Sand-



Top right: I'm holding Houston with his other grandmother, Rhonda Ford, in January 2020. She died two months later. It's the only photograph of all of us together. Top, from left: Michael Martin next to the tomb of Edward I, his 24<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, in 2003; home of Abraham Browne, my 8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, in Watertown, Massachusetts; I'm with my nephew David Moran and his daughter, Delaney (age 15) in 2019. Middle: Family reunion at 1820 home of William Phillips in 1994; Michael's family on Halloween night 2022; Michael and Becca at Stonehenge in 2003. Above: Halloween 2022, and Royal Gorge Bridge in October 2022. Right: Karen and I next to a nighcrawler; 2022.

that I took with my friend, Robert Pekar and his son Alex to the Grand Canyon and other interesting

wiched in there was also a 2,000 mile trip



places. Rebecca and I also went on a separate trip on Route 66 and stood on the corner in Winslow,



**Top left: Karen and I at the Cinemark Theater on October 10, 2022. Top right: Rebecca and me in downtown Philadelphia on the Rocky Statue in May 2022. Above, left to right: I'm at Nine Mile Canyon on Father's Day 2022; Treasure Falls in Colorado on October 15, 2022, and Rebecca and me at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. in May 2022. There are five Richard Martins that died in the war, which are listed on the monument. I've thought before, "What if there was a sixth Richard Martin listed. Would the world even notice?" Of course the answer is "No." My effect on the world, like most of my fellow travelers, is small.**

Arizona. Recently, I completed a special trip to Colorado for my birthday. There are some good stories in there, but I will let just mentioning them suffice. One thing I do want to mention is how amazing it was to see Dinosaur Ridge near Denver. Some paleontologist have named it the best dinosaur track site in America and it is definitely one of the best (see page 27). Also, seeing the ancient Anglo-Saxon monuments, medieval effigies, and Neolithic sites in England was special.

Also, I wrote three new family history books. I completely rewrote Seasons to Remember and doubled



its original size, and wrote two abridgements of all my family histories, which was quite a task, but



Top, left to right: Karen in front of our first apartment in Houston, 1976; me as a missionary in Culver City, California, 1973; with my son, Michael in 1990; (next row) I'm with my family at Disneyland in 1959 (me, Ron, Mom, Cathy, and Nancy); I'm at the grave of my grandmother Claire Smith in 2022; Michael when he was four years old in 1993; (next row) another view of my home in Provo, Utah, in 2021; Karen at a market in Morocco in 1972, and at the beach; I'm kneeling next to a monument my brother and I erected to our Nisbett great-grandparents in Jonesboro, Arkansas, in 2022; Jonathan, age 4, by a water fountain, 1987; my brother Ron with his nephews: Jonathan (left) and Greg Lamb, 1986.

many of these ancestral sites, including castles, effigies, and monuments when I went this year to England.



The state legislature of Utah passed our flag bill and the flag that my son had designed became the

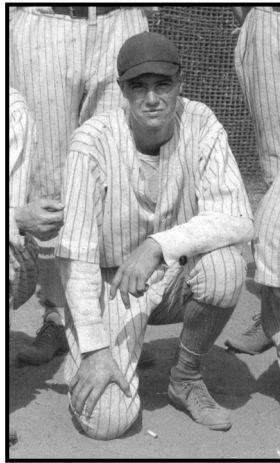
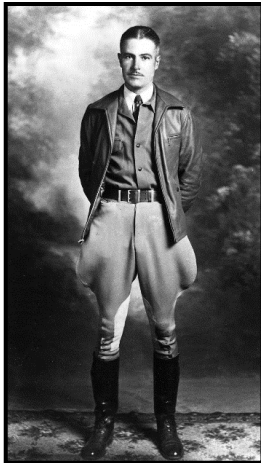
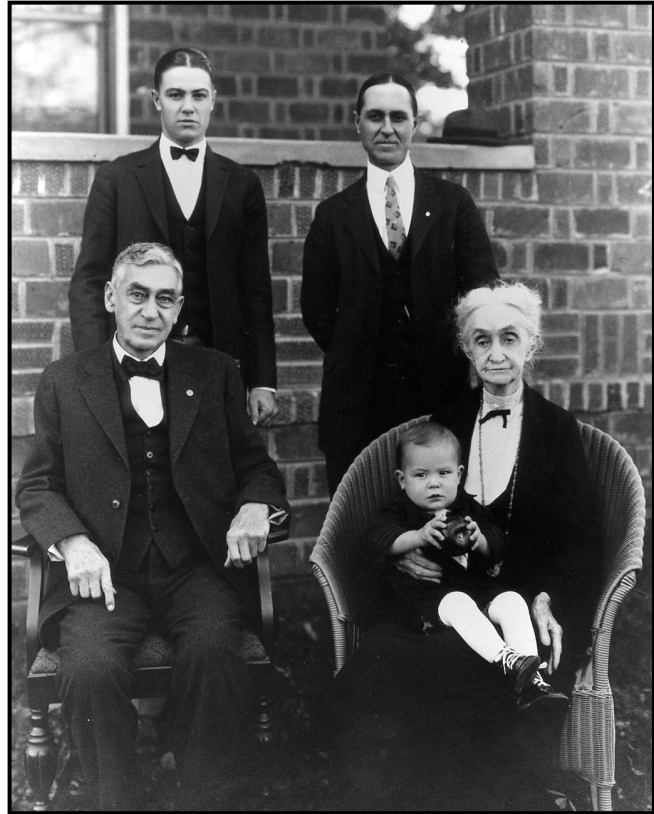


Top, left to right to bottom row: I'm reclining at San Rafael Canyon, Utah, 2022; Sarah (age 9 and Jonathan (age 11) in Missouri, 1994; Ron Martin next to gravestones of two of our fourth great-grandparents; Dinosaur Ridge, Colorado, October 12, 2022; Rebecca and Michael at Tinker monuments in 2006; Clyde Van Smith, my Great-Grandfather in Arkansas about 1900; I'm with Jonathan in Norwich, Connecticut, in 1996; Malvern Hill in Virginia—Coker family home; Jonathan in front of his first home in Houston, 2006; Marion Sharp and Clair Smith, my grandparents; Henry Smith and Maria Sidenbender, my 4<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents; gravestones of Elizabeth and Richard Cutter, my 9<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents, two of the oldest in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

first new official flag for the state of Utah in over a hundred years. It was made the commemorative



flag for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being a state, and flew over the capitol building for most of 2021



(see photographs on page 19). It was front page news all over the state and a real victory for me and my son.

**Top right:** Five generations of my Sharp family. **Clockwise:** Marion C. Sharp, Sr. (my grandfather), Carlos Lee Sharp (my great-grandfather), Sarah M. Capps (my great-great-great-grandmother), Marion C. Sharp, Jr. (my father), and James Simpson Sharp (my great-great-grandfather) in 1925. **Top left and middle:** my grandfather, Marion C. Sharp, Sr., played professional baseball for 7 years (second row middle), and worked for the Rock Island Railroad (wearing his uniform). **Above:** Marion C. Sharp, Jr. at Anzio in 1944 (my father) and Pat Bowles (my mother), and effigies of Katherine Mortimer and Earl Thomas Beauchamp, my 20<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents.

We went from having few supporters three years ago when I first lobbied for it, to having the state senate overwhelmingly endorse us by a vote of 25 to 3. In November 2022 it was announced that a vote for a new state flag would take place in January 2023. My son designed this new, proposed flag as well.



I just completed my most successful Halloween ever with over 450 children and youths visiting my



Top, left to right to bottom row: My mother's family in 1940; my grandmother, age 3, her uncle (middle) and parents (on right) in 1907; Augustus Burnet Smith, my second great-grandfather in 1890; Whit Morgan and Harriet Lay (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandparents) on their wedding day in 1866; family of Louis Barker and Maud Fulk Barker (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandparents) about 1923; grandparents: Thomas Bowles and Frances Massey Bowles about 1950; Redmond Rudd Smith (3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather, 1794-1881) about 1850; Benjamin Bratton, Sr. (3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather) in 1910; William Jackson Bowles (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandfather); Walter Bowles (Great-Grandfather), Anna Morgan Bowles (Great-Grandmother); gravestone of John Houghton (8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather), and gravestone of Simon Huntington (7<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather).

house. We decorated more than ever this year with two figures being twelve feet tall. For nine years



we have given out full bags of candy, and every year the weather has been nearly perfect. (Often the weather has changed after Halloween to winter weather in just a matter of days.)

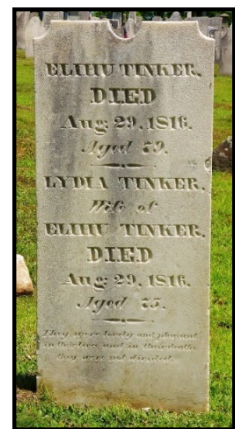
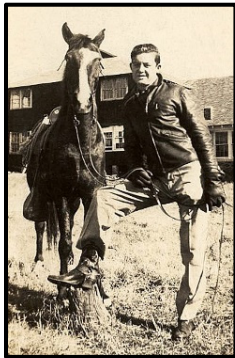
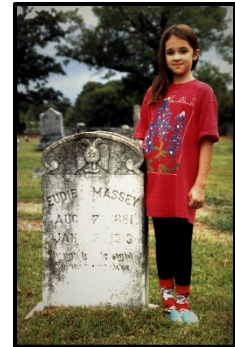
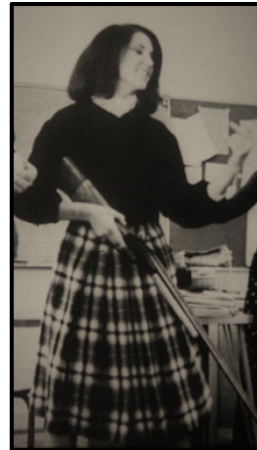


Top, left to right to bottom row (first three photographs): Effigy of William Marshal (25<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, 1147-1219) in London, England; family of Benjamin Bratton, Jr., my second great-grandfather (Cora Bratton, my great-grandmother, is standing behind him); Benjamin Bratton, Jr. and Mary Redman, my second great-grandparents; gravestone of Samuel Bennet (7<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather); monument of Esther Leppingwell Houghton (8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother), both in Lancaster, Massachusetts; my son and daughter, Michael and Rebecca Martin, at Carthage Jail in Illinois in 2006; my mother's siblings in 1946, left to right: Mildred, John "Buddy," Patricia (Mother), and Nancy Bowles; gravestone of Alexander and Agnes Nisbett (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents) in South Carolina; my brother, Ron Martin, next to gravestone of Whit Morgan, our second great-grandfather, in Arkansas. Top right to bottom (seven small photographs): Jane Young Rogers (4<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother), Ann Van Gundy Sidenbender (3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandmother); Sylvia Barker (Great-Grandmother); gravestone of Malinda Nevill (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparent), who lived to be 111 years old; my daughter, Rebecca Martin, age 16; William Nisbett (3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather), and William Massey (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandfather).

I want to write more, but this is meant to only be a summary of my life so I will close here by saying



as I reflect on my life I feel sentimental. I see when I was young and my sisters and brother still



Top, left to right to bottom row: I'm standing with my brother Ron, and sisters, Nancy (center) and Cathy in 1971; Cathy greeting me at the Houston airport as I return from my mission on September 27, 1975; Karen taking over her high school government class in 1970; Sarah next to the gravestone of Eudie Massey, her 2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Granduncle in 1993; my father with his horse about 1950; Karen in a dugout canoe in Mexico City in 1975; Karen in 1979; monument to Margaret Griswold, my 9<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother in Connecticut—photograph taken in 1994; main fireplace and parlor inside home of Abraham Browne, my 8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather—this house, built in 1697, is the oldest in Watertown, Massachusetts; my aunt, Mildred Bowles Brooks, took this photograph of me in 1992; gravestone of William Barker (3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Illinois, and double monument of Elihu and Lydia Huntington Tinker (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents), who died of natural causes on the same day in 1816.

alive. We were close and got along well. My mother was kind and non-judgmental. She set a good example for us and I



always honored her. From the time I was fourteen years old I tried to follow my conscience—eighth

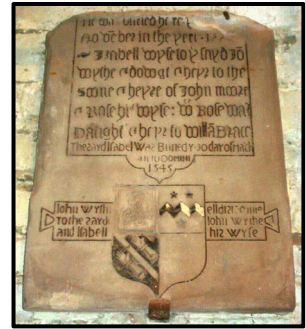
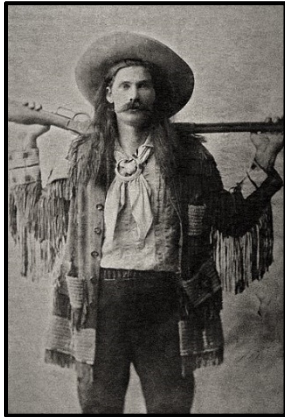


Top, left to right to bottom row: My father, Marion Sharp, Jr. (age 25) with my oldest sister, Cathy Sharp, in 1949; Elder Jonathan Martin with his sister, Sarah, who visited him while he was on his mission in Manchester, England, in 2003; the “Praying Knight” (Edward Despenser, 1335-1375, my 19<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Tewkesbury Abbey, England—I took this photograph in 2016; Karen (age 42) in 1994; 14<sup>th</sup> century stained glass window in Tewkesbury Abbey, depicting Hugh Despenser the Younger (1286-1326), my 21<sup>st</sup> Great-Grandfather; gravestone of George Sharp, a Union soldier—my 3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather (1830-1862); monument of Robert Houghton, my 8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather; my younger children, Michael and Rebecca at the monument of their 3<sup>rd</sup> Great-Grandfather, in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 2006; I’m with my grandson, Houston Martin, in 2020; gravestones of George and Sally Johnston Sharp, my 5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandparents, in Ellettsville, Indiana.

grade and my junior and senior year of high school were special because I grew so much during that



time. Serving a mission, meeting and marrying Karen, establishing a meaningful career, the birth of



Top, left to right to bottom row: Arizona Charlie (grandson of a Ruth Mattix, 5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandaunt), was a World Rodeo Champion and a Wild West entertainer; monuments of Deliverance Ross Houghton and Elizabeth Hastings Whitney (6<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmothers) in Marlboro, Vermont; grave slab of a 13<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather in England; gravestone of Frances Hosmer (9<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother) from 1675 in Hartford, Connecticut; I'm with my brother at the door of the 1695 home of Simon Huntington, our 7<sup>th</sup> Great-Granduncle, in Norwich, Connecticut, in 1999; monuments of James Rodgers (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in North Carolina, and Samuel Tinker (8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Old Lyme, Connecticut; grave-stones of Abraham Browne (8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Waltham, Massachusetts, Abigail Tinker (8<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother) on Long Island, New York, and Isaac Dancy (4<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Dancyville, Tennessee.



each of my children, teaching seminary, playing tennis, coaching basketball, taking hundreds of trips



across America and the world, and working on my genealogy for many years are special memories.

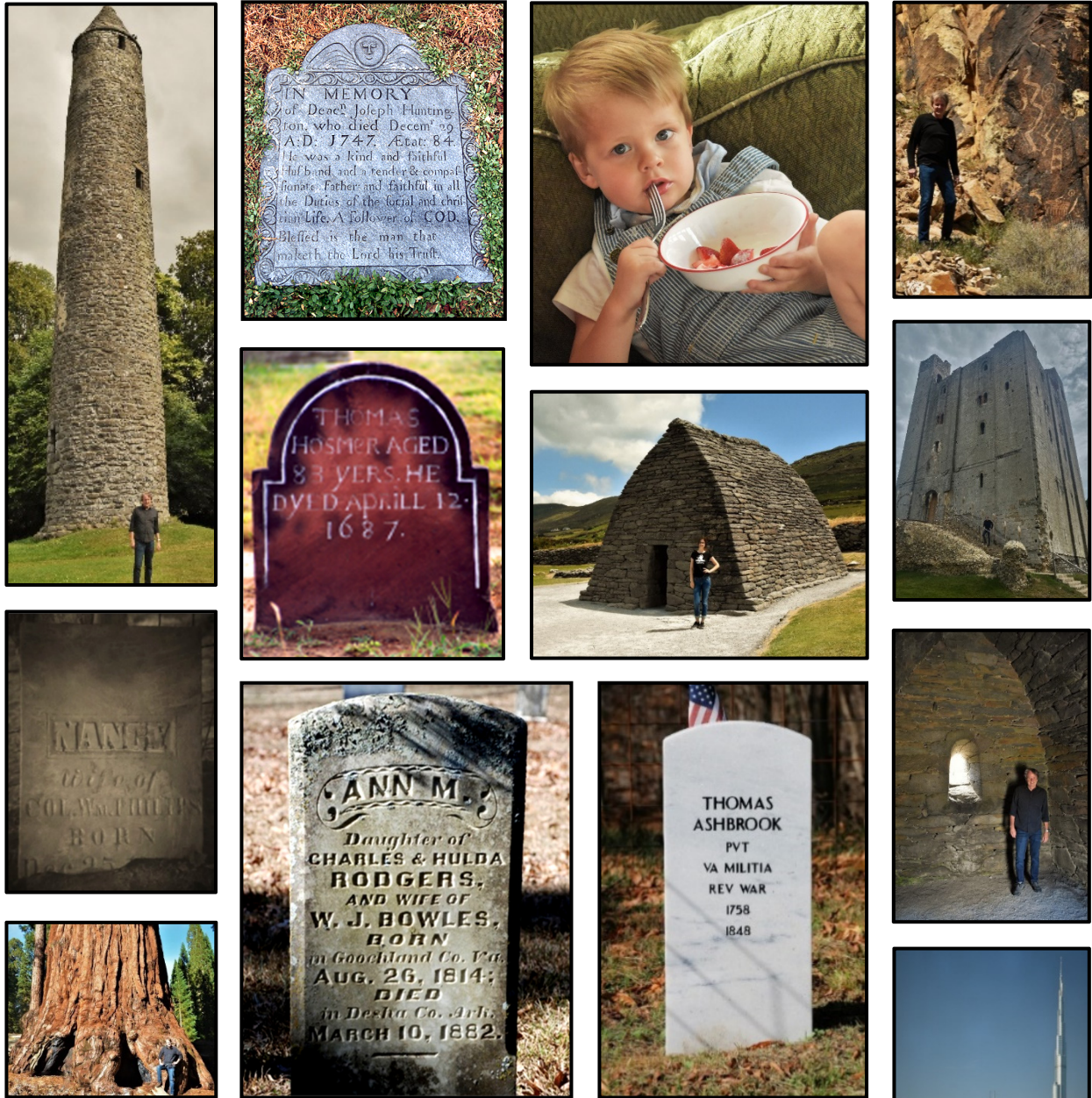


Top, left to right to bottom row: My family in 1961, left to right: Nancy, Mom, Cathy, me, and Ron; I'm receiving an award from Ralph Durham as one of the top brokers in America in 1987; Monticello, home of my close relative, Thomas Jefferson; I'm at an overlook of Croatia in 2017; High Cross at Monasterboice, Ireland, in 2017; Rebeca in Exeter Cathedral, England, in 2017—the light came through the window and appeared to only land on her; Red Hand Cave in Australia that dates from 400 A.D. gravestone of Thomas Adgate (9<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Norwich, Connecticut; oldest stone house in America; redwood tree in northern California, on October 12, 2018; gravestone of William Bowles (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Tyro, Arkansas; Mesa Arch in Canyonlands, Utah, 2014; grave slab of William Onyett (4<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in New Orleans, and 5,000 year old Neolithic site of Cairholy in Scotland, 2018.

I felt compelled to attempt some unusual things like running for governor of Utah and lobbying for



a new state flag, but the gospel has always been the most important thing in my life. I've never forgotten



Top, left to right to bottom row: Antrim Round Tower in Northern Ireland, 2018; gravestone of Joseph Huntington (7<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Connecticut; Houston Martin (age 2 ½) in 2018; I'm standing next to a rattlesnake petroglyph near Parowan, Utah, in 2018; monument of Thomas Hosmer (9<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Massachusetts; Gallarus Oratory, which may be the oldest church in Ireland; Hedingham Castle built by Aubrey de Vere (26<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather); gravestone of Nancy Henderson Phillips (4<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother) in Kentucky; base of giant sequoia tree in California in 2012; monument of Ann M. Rogers (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandmother) in Tyro, Arkansas; military monument of Thomas Ashbrook (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Indiana; I'm inside the Gallarus Oratory in 2018, and the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, the tallest building in the world; 2019.

how lost I felt until I learned the purpose of life and how wonderful it was when I found it! I think that if you are spiritually inclined, the secular, materialistic life can be very unsatisfying, and it was for me.



I wanted God in my life, and even before I knew that he was the answer to everything, in a moment



Top, left to right to bottom row: Monument of James S. Sharp (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Ellettsville, Indiana; Mt. Vernon in 2022; Rebecca with John Lennon in Liverpool, England, in 2018; Mary Phillips (2<sup>nd</sup> Great-Grandmother); William D. Martin (son of Helen Barker, my Great-Grandaunt), who was a decorated, Mustang fighter pilot during World War II; Angkor Wat ruins in 2019; Sego Canyon, Utah—2,000 to 5,000 year old rock art, October 2022; General Sherman Tree, the largest on earth; Nancy and Ron in 1971; I'm inside Carlisle Castle, England, in 2018; gravestone of Eliphalet Whitney (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather) in Morristown, Vermont; portrait of Rev. Stephen Buckingham (7<sup>th</sup> Great-Granduncle; 1682-1752); gravestone of Hannah Griswold Clark (7<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandaunt; 1658-1687)—she is the oldest female burial in Plymouth, Massachusetts, and, overall, the fifth oldest; I'm next to the image of my relative, Llys Llywedyn, Prince of Wales; monument of Henry Smith (5<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather; 1752-1838), who was a Revolutionary War soldier; Jack Swilling (1830-1878; grandson of Thomas Farrar, 5<sup>th</sup> Great-Granduncle), who was the founder of Phoenix, Arizona.

of anguish, I cried out to him and he answered my call for help. In just a matter of months, everything



changed for the better. It's too personal to go into further, but I give thanks to God for his love and



Top row: Rebecca and a Koala Bear in Symbio Wildlife Park, Australia, and Rebecca feeding Wallabies/Kangaroos at the same park on May 12, 2019, and Jonathan, age 1 ½ on a canon in Mexico in 1984. Middle: Design for the new Utah state flag as proposed by my son, Jonathan Martin, and its appearance after it was modified by the state flag committee. (Jonathan later got the state to change the star to one with five points.) We think the new flag is good, but we think it comes in third place compared to the commemorative or three peak design. I'm at Ta Prohm in Angkor Wat, Cambodia, in 2019; Michael and Shaylee on Halloween in 2014—they married the following year; Jonathan, Sarah, and baby Michael in 1990; Ghostbuster Michael Martin in 1994; I'm (age 11) with my aunt, Mildred Bowles Brooks, and on the Battleship Texas with the San Jacinto Monument behind me in January 1965; Rebecca at the Door of Humility in Bethlehem; 2019.

mercy, and I will give thanks to him forever for the life he has given me.

Who can say enough about his wisdom and his goodness? He is magnificent.

(For a more complete history of my life, see my other autobiography that is over 1,000 pages long.)



Today is July 14, 2023, and I couldn't resist adding a few more sentences and some new photographs

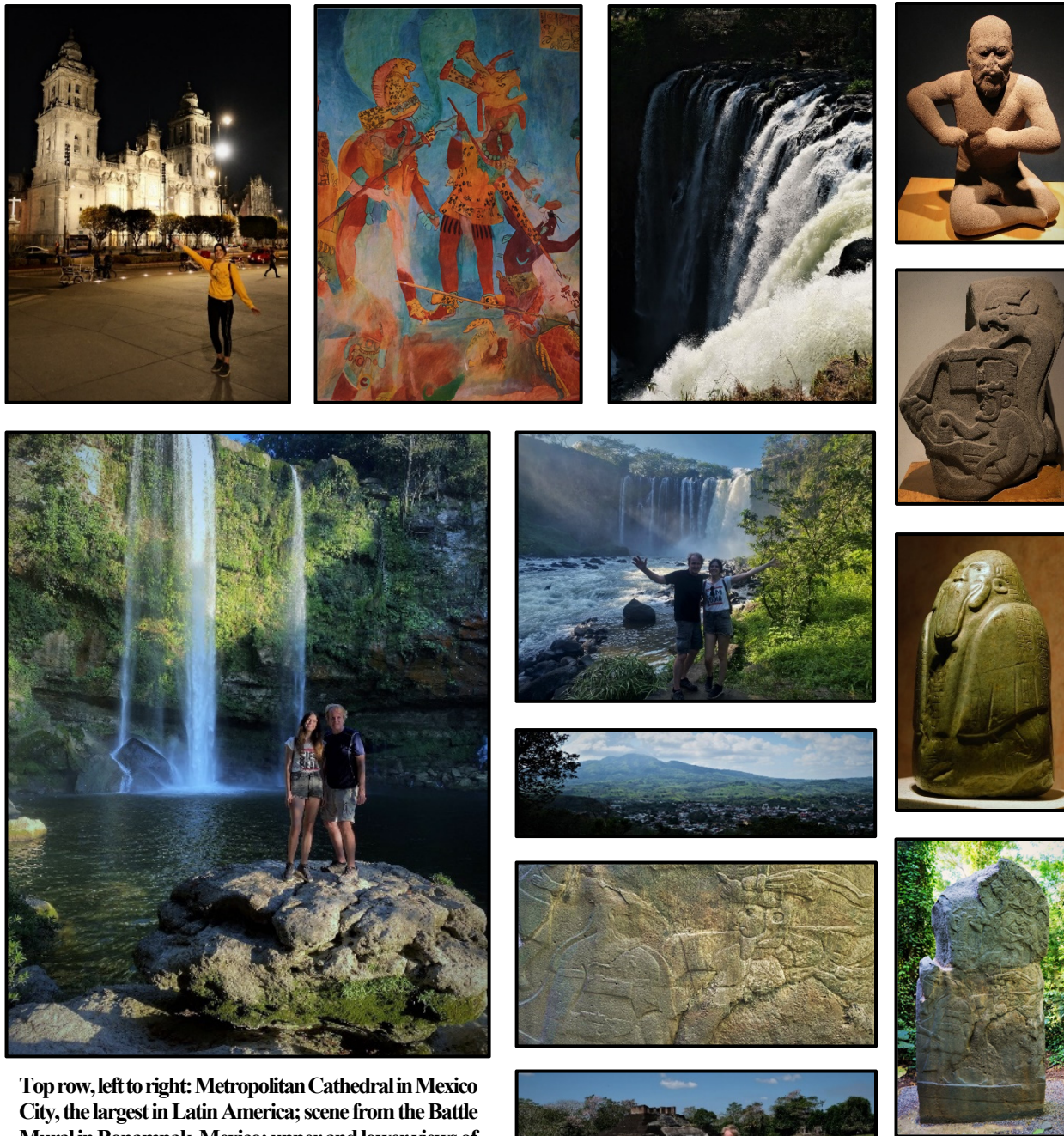


Top row, left to right: Pine Valley, Utah, historic church; cave paintings from Sierra de San Francisco, Mexico, and Rebecca on top of the main pyramid in Tula, Mexico, next to the 15 foot tall stone sculptures, the Atlantes, 900 to 1200 AD. Middle: The great Aztec Sun Stone; Rebecca next to a sacrificial altar, and by the Jaguar Mural on the Avenue of the Dead, Teotihuacan (100 BC to 650 AD), and the Battle Mural in the Cacaxta ruins, Mexico. Above, left to right: Man burning in Purgatory, Giant Olmec sculpture (900 BC) in Museo de Antropologia de Xalapa in east Mexico, and the Bird Man Mural in Cacaxta; all photographs were taken in February 2023.

to this summary of my life. On February 21, 2023, I went on a ten day trip to Mexico where I drove 1,900 miles from Mexico City to the ruins of Teotihuacan and Tula (north of the city), and visited the



Museo Nacional de Antropologia, one of the greatest museums in the world. West of Mexico City, we



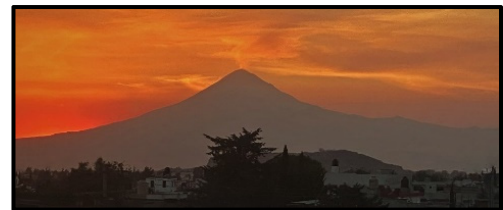
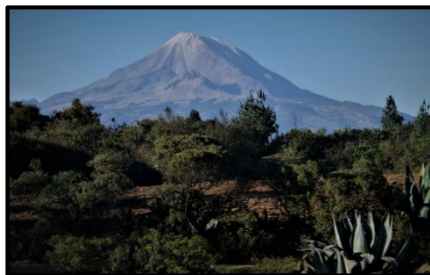
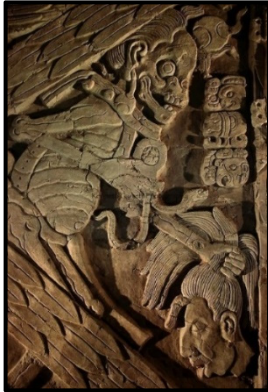
Top row, left to right: Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City, the largest in Latin America; scene from the Battle Mural in Bonampak, Mexico; upper and lower views of Eyipantla Falls, Mexico (150 feet tall and 120 feet wide). Above: Rebecca and me at Misol-Ha in Chiapas, Mexico. Middle: The Hill Vigia that may be the Hill Cumorah; close-up of Stele Number 3 (right) from La Venta, depicting two men, dressed differently, meeting for the first time, and ruins of Comalcalco. Right from top: Olmec "wrestler;" oldest depiction of Quetzalcoatl; the Tuxtla Statuette, and Karen's boat in Mexico City; 2023.

saw the Hill Vigia that may be the Hill Cumorah, the huge Eyipantla Falls, the Parque-Museo de La

saw the Battle Mural in the ruins of Cacaxta, the Museo de Antropologia de Xalapa, and Vera Cruz. We



Venta in Villahermosa, the ruins of Palenque, and waterfall of Misol-Ha, which is set in a tropical

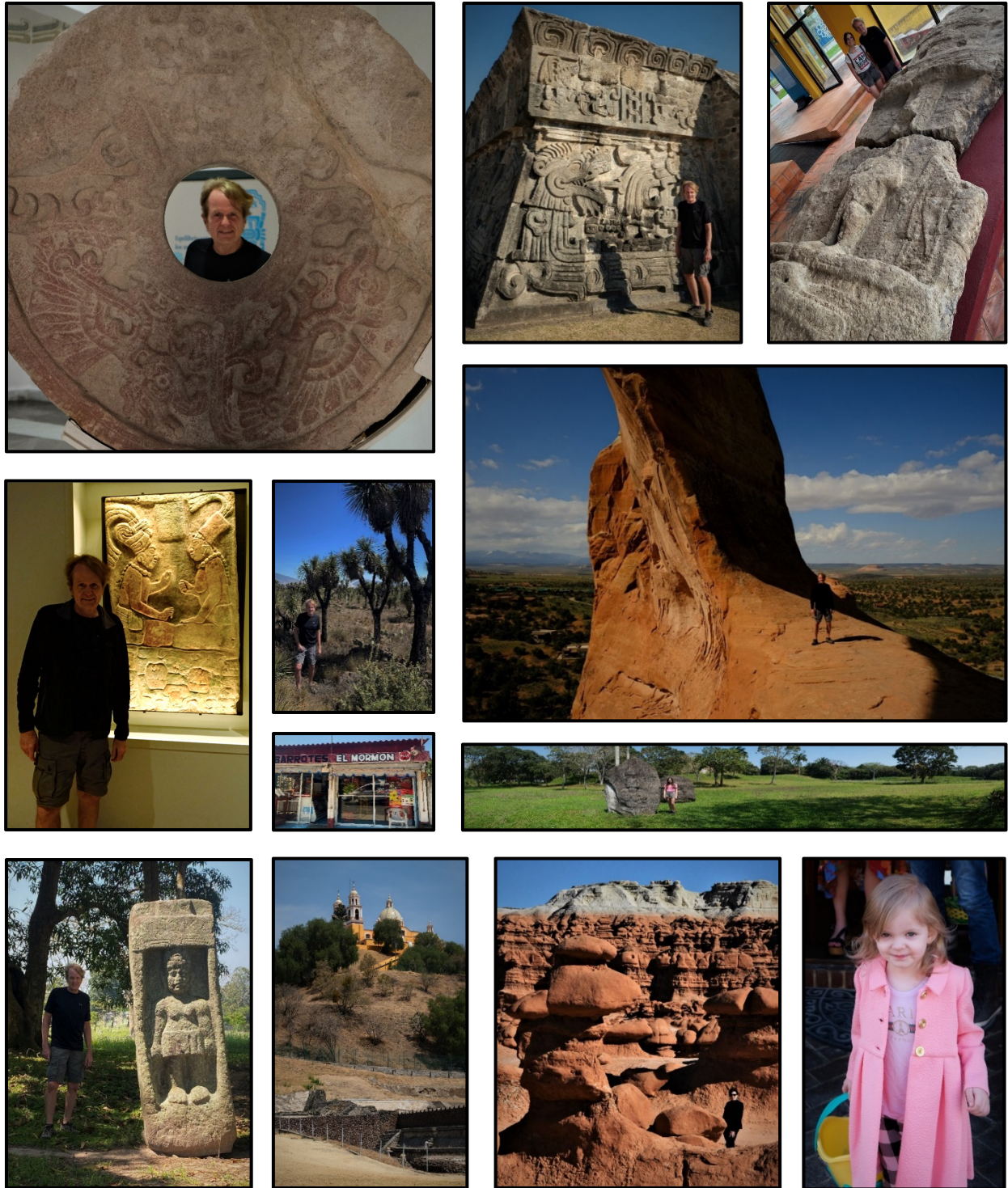


**Top:** The ruins of Tonina in Chiapas, Mexico; sculpture from Tonina, showing a skeleton holding the severed head of a ruler from Palenque about 700 AD. I'm at Misol-Ha Waterfall in Chiapas, Mexico. **Middle:** The Palace in Palenque with its "observation tower" (226 BC to 799 AD). Rebecca near the Hill Vigia that may be the Hill Cumorah. Agua Azul Cascades in Chiapas, Mexico. **Above and right:** View from main highway of rain forest in Chiapas; Volcanic mountains of Pico de Orizaba and Popocatepetl (right), and Puebla, Mexico; all 2023.

forest. We drove into Chiapas and saw the tallest pyramid in Mexico at the archaeological site of Tonina, and Agua Azul Cascades. We saw other ancient sites as well, including La Venta



and Xochicalco, and the two highest mountains in Mexico: Pico de Ozizaba and Popocatepel. Puebla

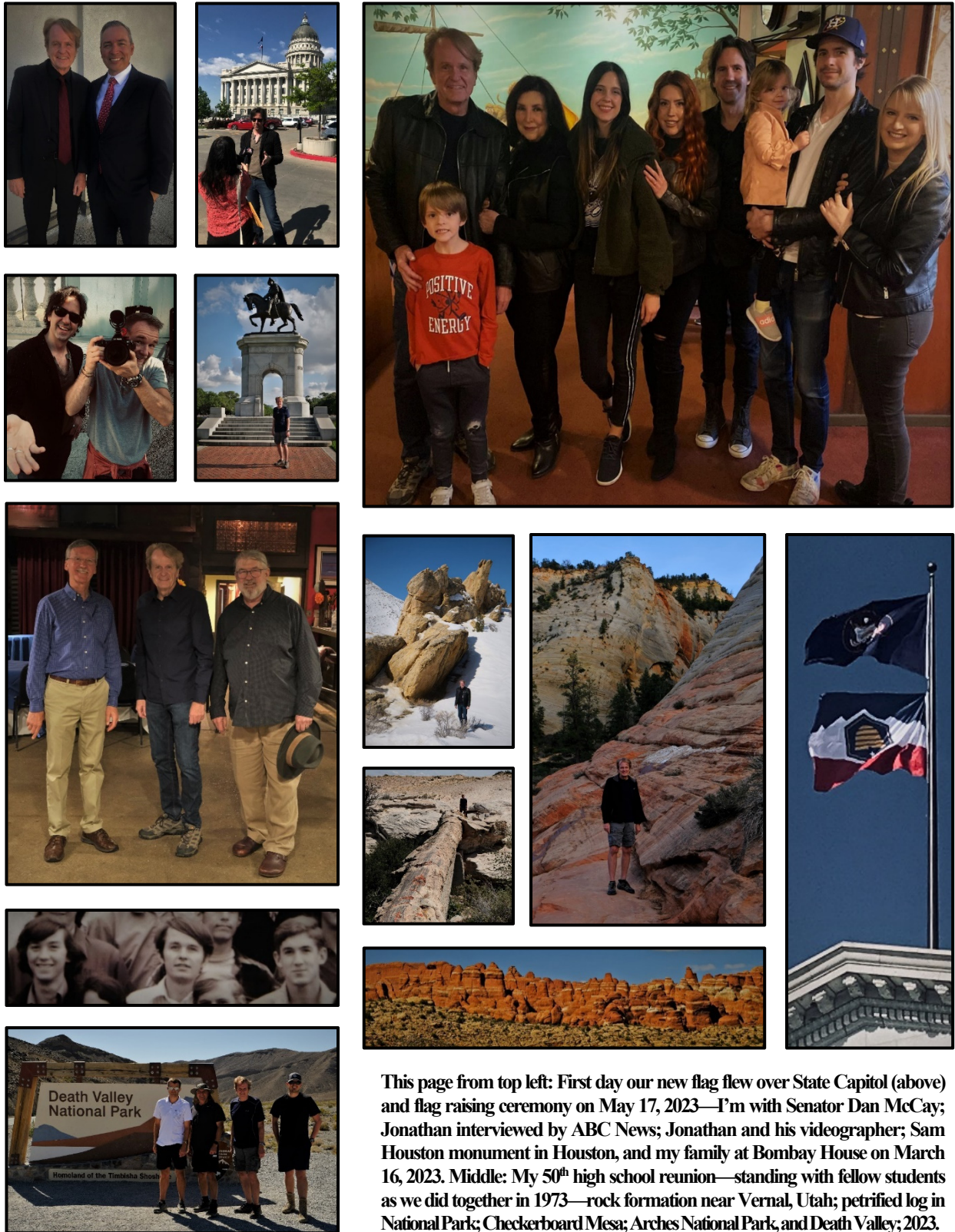


**Top:** I'm looking through an ancient ball court ring at Xochicalco, Mexico; Pyramid of the Plumed Serpent (Quetzalcoat) in Xochicalco, and a huge monument at Tres Zapotes (1000 to 400 BC). **Middle:** Mayan relief with its color; Joshua tree forest; El Mormon store in town of La Venta, Mexico, and I'm standing on Wilson Arch, Utah, 2023. **Above, left to right:** Monument at La Venta (panoramic in middle) at exact spot found in 1950s; great pyramid at Cholula, Mexico; Karen in Goblin Valley, Utah, in 2019, and Maddie Martin at Easter 2023.

was a nice city and is home to one of the best archeological museums in Mexico. This was my eighth



trip to Mexico, but Rebecca’s first. We took some chances, but everything worked out well.



This page from top left: First day our new flag flew over State Capitol (above) and flag raising ceremony on May 17, 2023—I’m with Senator Dan McCay; Jonathan interviewed by ABC News; Jonathan and his videographer; Sam Houston monument in Houston, and my family at Bombay House on March 16, 2023. Middle: My 50<sup>th</sup> high school reunion—standing with fellow students as we did together in 1973—rock formation near Vernal, Utah; petrified log in National Park; Checkerboard Mesa; Arches National Park, and Death Valley; 2023.

A week after I got home I went on another 2,000 mile trip with my friend Bobbie Pekar and his sons,



Alex and Jon, and then in May I went with my family to France and Spain where I drove an additional

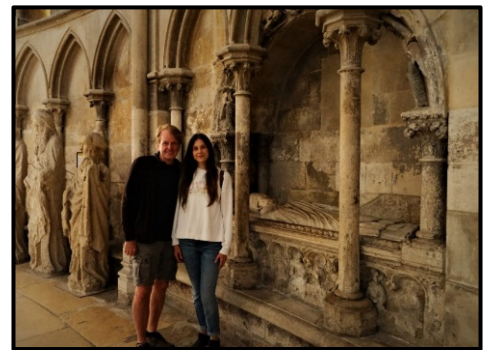
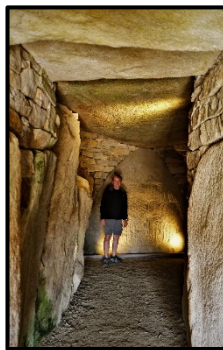


This page from top left: I'm holding my grandchildren on March 16, 2023; dolmen in central France; second tallest menhir in France, and Pointe de Corsen, point farthest west on mainland France (middle); I'm at Minute Maid Park by a Houston Astros World Series championship billboard; two scenes on the Bayeux Tapestry, depicting the Battle of Hastings in 1066; depiction of Geoffrey Plantagenet, my 29<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather, from 1155 (LaMans, France); interior of Amiens Cathedral, the largest in France; Lascaux IV; Grand Canyon, and Rebecca by a dolmen near Carnac, France; all 2023.

3,700 miles. I've been to France at least 15 times, but this was one of my best trips ever. In all Rebecca



and I walked almost 100 miles, visited the farthest point west in France, and the farthest point east in



**Top row: I'm at Mount Saint Michel, Normandy, France; Bison and other animals that I saw in situ in Font-de-Gaume, France, and images from the Lascaux cave (17,000 years old). Middle: Rebecca at entrance to a Neolithic passage tomb; Table des Marchand, which dates from 5,000 BC; recumbent tomb statue of Hugh of Amiens, the oldest in France (1164 AD); Karen, Emily Ashby, Jonathan, and Becca in Provins, France, and I'm with my daughter, Rebecca, and sons in Provins in June 2023. (I'm six feet tall, but my sons are taller.)**

Spain. We saw four castles, eleven Neolithic structures/sites, ten cathedrals, three ancient caves, four abbeys, three museums, three battlefields, two palaces,



and seven major Roman structures/sites. We even went to Euro Disney and participated in the largest

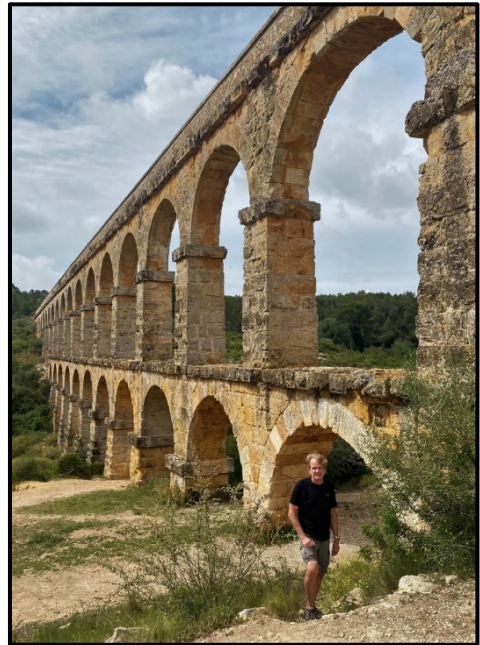


Top left: Jonathan and Emily in Saint Quiriace Collegiate Church, Provins, France, for their wedding celebration on June 3, 2023. I took this photograph, and it's my favorite of them together. Middle: Jonathan Thomas Martin and Michael Richard Martin, my sons—Emily and Rebecca are good friends. Above: Rebecca holding an owl, and Emily holding a bald eagle—on this day you didn't want to be a mouse—and an elegant photograph of Jonathan and Emily. Left: I took this picture of this magnificent bald eagle in flight; June 2023.

medieval festival in Europe. What was most important though was the marriage celebration of my



oldest son, Jonathan, to Emily Ashby, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century Cathedral in Provins, France. It was the best

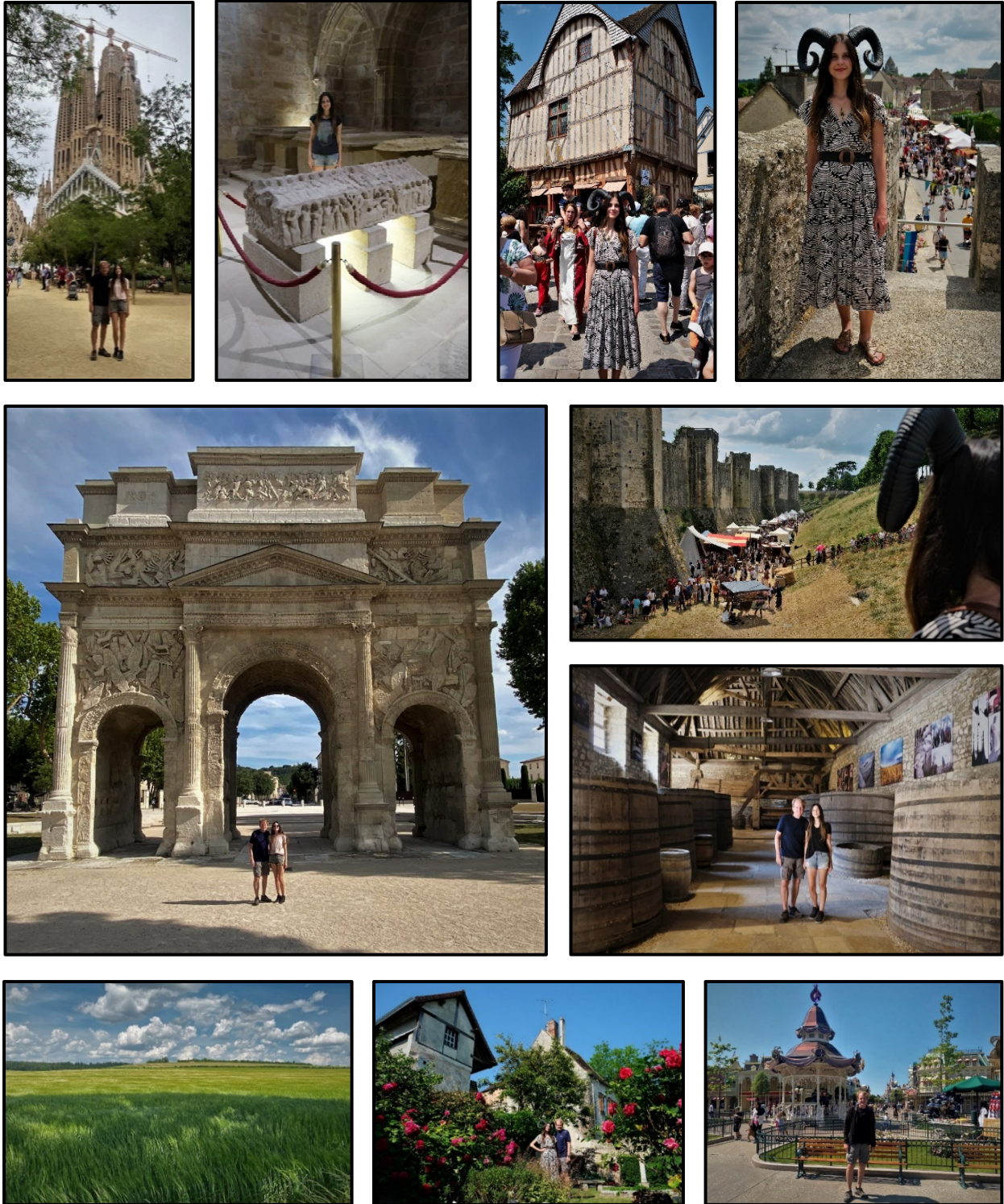


Top: My son Michael is an excellent dancer; Michael and Jonathan in Provins, France, and a staged cutup scene at Jonathan’s wedding. Middle: Casket in which El Cid (31<sup>st</sup> Great-Grandfather; 1041-1099) was buried, in Burgos Cathedral (center); Cap de Creus, the farthest point east on the Spanish mainland. Above: Saint-Jean chapel, which has the best medieval murals in the Pope’s Palace, Avignon, France; Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain, and Les Ferreres Aqueduct (27 BC to 14 AD). Left: Site of Battle of Alesia; 2023.

wedding celebration that I had ever been to, and we are so glad that Jonathan choose Emily. They



have been dating for about three years and she has become a wonderful part of our family. I was



**Top: Sagrada Família; tomb of Dona Blanca de Navarra (Queen of Castile; 1133-1156; my 28<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandmother), and Becca, wearing her horns at the Provins Medieval Festival. Middle: Triumphal Arch in Orange, France; walls of Provins, and historic, wine vats in Chateau du Clos De Vougeot (1551). Above: A peaceful field; Provins, and Euro Disney; 2023.**

impressed by how many of Jonathan's friends flew to France to participate in the celebration. It was



the height of the travel season to Europe, so car rentals and flights were more expensive than normal and yet they still came.

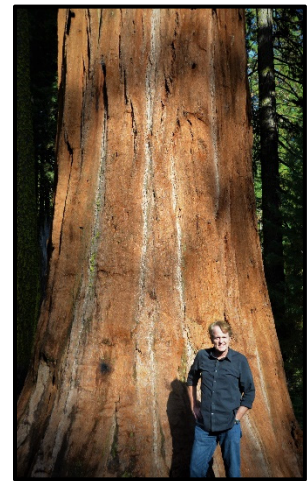
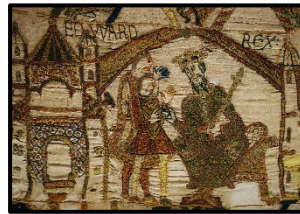


**Top:** Rebecca and me at the Trocadero in Paris on June 12, 2023. Forge of Fontenay (1220 AD), the first metallurgical factory in Europe. **Middle:** The Saere-Coeur (Sacred Heart Basilica) in Paris. **Left:** A tired Karen Martin, Jack's beanstalk, and the Runaway Train (above) in Euro Disney. **Above right:** I'm walking down an alleyway between half-timbered buildings from the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Troyes, France (also top right); June 2023.

I'm grateful that I got to see Europe again. On these journeys I always meet some nice people. In general I've been blessed to see much of the world and to visit many ancient sites; of course travel is an important part of my life. Karen loves it too and is a brave adventurer. She has been that way ever since she took out a loan when she was 23 years old to explore Central and



South America for three months. She went by herself and I've always admired her for having the courage to actively pursue her dreams.



**Top:** I'm with Karen at the Cathedral of San Fernando (the oldest cathedral in the United States, founded in 1731) in downtown San Antonio, Texas on December 18, 2022, and Karen kissing a dinosaur in Moab, Utah, in 2019. **Middle:** Original first scene of the Bayeux Tapestry and Karen's exact copy that she sewed in 2005. **Left:** Mission San Jose (1720) near San Antonio; 2023. **Above:** Two Haunted Mansion scenes in October 2010; I'm in Palmyra, New York, in 1983, and by redwood tree in 2012.

## Conclusion

How do you write a good conclusion to your life? Usually, if anyone writes anything at all, they write it as an obituary, which, according to the dictionary, is "a notice of a death, especially in a newspaper,



typically including a brief biography of the deceased person.” Wikipedia adds that they “tend to focus on the positive aspects of a subject’s life.” That’s so true! Most of my ancestors didn’t have an obituary, but more of a simple death notice, if anything at all. It’s actually sad—you come, you go, and few notice, or know you well enough to care. Such is the fate of almost all of us.

Okay, I can live with that. My goal in life was never to be famous or powerful, but I did want to make enough money so that I wouldn’t be at the mercy of other men, and, for the most part, I accomplished that goal. I found out at an early age that I didn’t do well under the authority of others and I needed money so I wouldn’t have to answer to them. I wanted to be able to have time for my favorite things, such as genealogy, and travel. God blessed me with the right career so I was able to do both.

I wanted to be someone who possessed knowledge and had insights into the deeper mysteries of life. I felt I might be able to achieve this by studying three things well: The scriptures, Hugh Nibley’s writings, and astronomy or physics. (Of course I also read many other books along the way.) I think the kind of study that I did helped me to achieve a more mature understanding of many things, but without revelation some things can never be known.

Soon after I joined the church, I learned that at death everyone goes into the spirit world where they can continue to progress until the Day of Judgement. There the gospel is preached in its fullness, and anyone who desires it can accept or reject it. Baptism and other ordinances are performed by proxy in the temple, but in order to complete this, genealogical research is necessary to tie all of the lines together. I took this teaching seriously, at first as a duty, but later I caught the full vision of it and enjoyed the research and compiling of my records as a joy in and of itself. For this reason I’ve spent a huge amount of time compiling my family history, organizing this research into books, and submitting my work into the temple. Many thousands of hours were spent in these activities, which became an obsession, but I think a worthy obsession.

Even my autobiography is a result of teachings that I received in the church. Beginning in the mid-1970s, President Spencer W. Kimball encouraged all members to keep a journal and to write a personal history. Of course I had no idea it would grow to be over a thousand pages long. This has helped me to appreciate my life more, and, hopefully, will be a blessing to some of my descendants in years to come.

It’s interesting how life goes. You’re young, you make a few decisions, set some goals, the years go by and before you know it, you’re middle aged. My mother used to say that life goes faster as you get older, and I found that to be true.

Some of my favorite memories are of my junior and senior years of high school and the years I served on my mission (1971-1975). These were years of real growth. I got home from California and decided that I liked the beautiful brunette who had recently moved into my ward. (Karen was guided to Houston—one proof of this is how she met my sister, Nancy before she knew anything about me.) Eventually, we dated and a year later married. During this time I was working downtown for McGraw Hill and going to the University of Houston, where I got my degree in Business in three years. Then I taught distributive education for two years before beginning my career as an annuity broker for the next 41 years.

Now I’m 68 years old. I read the scriptures or other worthy books every day, work out six days a week,



walk on a nearby trail with my youngest daughter almost every day, and play tennis each week. I continue to compile family histories, and to do my annuity business. Every few months I go on a major trip, usually with Rebecca. I've been blessed.

When I think about things, it's easy to see that one day all of this will end. My brother died of an unexpected heart attack ten years ago at the age of 63. He had no idea that he was about to suddenly leave this world. I'm sure he was disappointed that he didn't get more time. So my goal is to live well, but I realize that I'm not achieving my potential. I'm still hoping to accomplish something wonderful, but if that doesn't happen, I'm grateful for the life God has given me. In every way he has blessed me.